

ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROGRAM (MEDIATION)

In 2004, the Juvenile Court implemented a special program that allows for parents to work together to resolve custody and/or visitation matters without Court involvement. Mediation offers parents the opportunity to sit down with a professionally trained mediator in a relaxed setting, to speak freely and address the issues. This process permits the parents to have more control over their case, as opposed to Court imposing sanctions. Mediation sessions are conducted with both parents and their attorneys, if any are involved, and the mediator.

Mediation can be ordered by the Court at any time or litigants may petition the Court directly in order to participate in the program.

The ADR/Mediation Program provides low-income families the opportunity to participate in what is typically a more expensive process. The costs related to the ADR/Mediation Program are as follows: a \$20 ADR Fee with each parent owing \$10 and then a Co-Payment Fee per case/per parent. The Co-Payment Fee is determined by each parent's ability to pay based upon their incomes and set out by the Lake County Family Court Guideline Table.

Another mediation option offered by the Juvenile Court is **FLASH MEDIATION**. **FLASH MEDIATION** allows for parents, who are close to an agreement or who can agree to sit down with a mediator, to resolve the issues within a very short period of time. These mediations follow the parents' participation in the Working Through Parenting Conflict Class. The cost for this mediation is \$10 per parent with no additional costs incurred. Again, this type of mediation is for those parents who are able to work together and only need a bit of assistance with final resolution that is in the best interest of the child(ren).

Any questions/concerns regarding the Juvenile Court's Alternative Dispute Resolution Program (Mediation) may be directed to the Family Court Coordinator, KAREN NAURACY, at (219) 660-6961.